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Equal Rights

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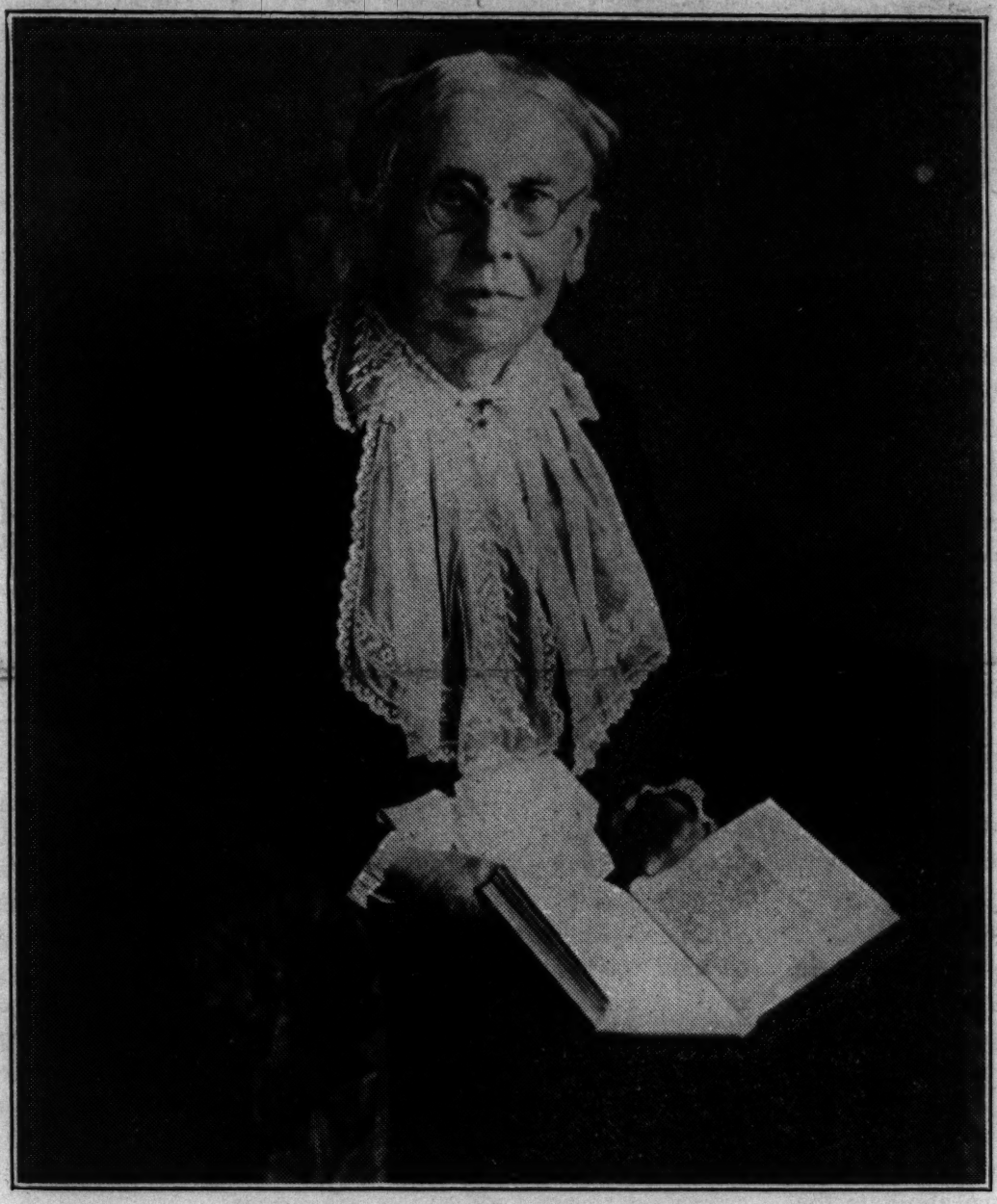

Rev. Olympia Brown

Pioneer Feminist who died at her home in Baltimore, Maryland, on October 23. Mrs. Brown was a member of the National Woman's Party, and for over seventy years worked to establish Equal Rights in the laws and customs of her country. For her devotion to the cause of Justice she will be long remembered.

Feminist Notes

Women in Africa

THE correspondent of the *Associated Press* described the status of women in Africa as follows:

"Along the entire littoral of north-western Africa women are considered by the natives as of much less value than beasts of burden. The men, who never think of working, regard the woman as an instrument of labor which should be utilized to its utmost capacity and then scrapped, to be replaced by newer tools. Once beyond work, the woman is abandoned to exist as well as she can on rejected food, in the same way as a dog.

"An Arab along these shores when he goes a courting visits the places on the riverside where the women folk do their laundry work. Without uttering a word he selects the girl whom he considers will best suit his purpose. He continues watching her for several days to see how she labors. Then he follows her to her father's tent, where he enters and declares his passion in flowery language to the fond parent, who begins bargaining and terminates with making a contract.

"This contains the price at which the girl is to be handed over, and an advance must be made. The girl belongs to her suitor. Love making is then at an end. The girl begins her labors for her new lord, often under the whip. This continues throughout her young life, and when she is no longer able to do the hard tasks she is cast aside for a new and younger bride, who also treats her as a slave."

Women as Sheriffs in Wisconsin

DUE to a peculiarity of the Wisconsin law, women have rapidly come to the front as sheriffs in Wisconsin. The law does not permit a sheriff to succeed himself. As a consequence, it has been the custom in Wisconsin for a sheriff to appoint a friendly deputy, who runs to succeed the sheriff, and in turn appoints the ex-sheriff his deputy. At the next election, the former sheriff, having been merely a deputy for a term, again runs, and so on in an endless chain of swapping the jobs of sheriff and deputy sheriff between two men. But now the wives have begun to run to succeed their husbands. If elected, they appoint their husbands as deputies, and then at the next election the husband is again the candidate.

The five women candidates for sheriff in Wisconsin to succeed their husbands this year are: Mrs. H. W. Brooks, Green Lake County; Cora Eerspamer, Iron County; Mrs. J. J. Wagoner, Washburn County; Mrs. E. S. Jacobson, Barron County, and Mrs. V. V. Miller, Rusk County.

Bulgarian Women's Progress

THE Bulgarian Federation of Women's Clubs held the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of its founding at a meeting recently in the Capital. The quarter of a century of the League's existence has seen the rapid advance in literacy among women, the opening of many high schools for girls, and a great influx of women into the teaching and other professions.

Nuns Vote in Belgium

THE sight of cloistered nuns following Queen Elizabeth into a polling booth to record their ballots in the communal election on October 10 indicated how seriously Belgian women take civic duties devolving upon them under the communal electoral law passed five years ago.

Women in Business

COMMENTING on Judge Elbert Gary's recent praise of women in business, the Washington *Post* says:

"No greater praise of woman was ever given than that of Elbert H. Gary, head of the steel corporation, in a public address made by him on Thursday night last. Mr. Gary was speaking before a business men's organization and, doubtless, had in mind the woman in business, but his characterization was so general as to be applicable to her in every sphere of life.

" 'In morals, persistent endeavor, honesty and determination, women have always been better than men,' declared this speaker, who has had perhaps a broader experience with persons in industrial life, both in clerical and executive positions, than any other business leader in the country.

"It is only within the last decade that woman has entered the pathways of commerce and trade in the United States, but her progress has been rapid and sure. The open door was not closed against women when the war ended. By means of that honesty and determination which Mr. Gary compliments so highly, they won a place in the business world from which they will never be dislodged. Instances of their remarkable success have been many, and if a correct census could be taken it is probable that, given opportunity with men, the man has failed more often than the woman. Mr. Gary champions the theory that men and women should be allowed to work wherever they please, and that unless this is granted no country will prosper. Statistics prove that thus far female workers in the United States have earned the praise bestowed upon them by one of America's greatest captains of industry."

French Girl Fights for Educational Right

A GIRL of 18 has confounded the Ministry of Education of France. Marie Louise Jacotin not only passed the examination for admission to the Ecole Normale, a school from which the aristocracy of French savants is recruited, but did it so brilliantly that she was classified second in order of merit.

The authorities didn't know what to do about it. Afraid to allow a precedent to be created, they found no better solution than deliberately to announce by ministerial decree that Mlle. Jacotin had classified twenty-first — only twenty are allowed to enter the school each year. But as a sop to her merit she was given a scholarship elsewhere.

In vain the victim protested. University directors threw up their arms in horror. "Don't you realize, poor thing," they exclaimed, "the Ecole Normale is for young men and they have to live and sleep in dormitories. What would people say?"

"But I could live with my parents. I only want to follow the lessons and lectures," timidly observed Marie Louise.

"Ah, and how about hazing, which is traditional at the school from time immemorial and to which every newcomer has to submit. This kind of hazing isn't exactly suitable for a girl."

This final argument seemed triumphant to the professors, but has simply made all France laugh, while the press ridicules the educational authorities and accuses them of rank injustice, not to speak of trickery. Mlle. Jacotin's champions say they refuse to believe that pupils of the Ecole Normale are less gallant than their comrades of other colleges where young men and maidens pursue their studies side by side without giving rise to scandal. So it seems that the authorities will have to retreat before public opinion and reinstate Mlle. Jacotin in the place of honor she won.

Woman Barred From Ministry

ST. PAUL'S admonition to "let the women keep silence in the church" was quoted in an adverse report on the application of Mrs. Elizabeth M. Finn of Philadelphia for ordination as a Baptist minister at Bridgeton, New Jersey.

The report precipitated a lively discussion, during which the Rev. Robert R. Thompson of Bridgeton expressed the belief that "if St. Paul had been a married man instead of a bachelor, he wouldn't have spoken as he did of women."

Mrs. Finn is the widow of a minister who was under the jurisdiction of the Western New Jersey Baptist Association.

The Advisory Committee voted 4 to 1 against Mrs. Finn's ordination.

What the National Woman's Party Has Done For Women in New York

By Jane Norman Smith

Editor's Note: Mrs. Smith is chairman of the New York Branch of the Woman's Party and a member of the National Council of the Woman's Party.

THE New York Branch of the National Woman's Party has secured the passage of nine Equal Rights bills by the New York Legislature. These laws affect approximately 3,500,000 women.

1922

A general Equal Rights bill was introduced in the New York Legislature at the request of the Woman's Party, but was not reported out of committee.

1923

At the regular session of the New York Legislature the Woman's Party endeavored to secure legislation giving to women all the rights that men possess under the law. The Legislature passed four of the Equal Rights bills introduced by Senator Cotillo. These bills were signed by Governor Smith and are now the law:

1. The mother was given equal right with the father to inherit real estate from a deceased child. (*Formerly the father usually inherited to the exclusion of the mother.*)
2. The distant woman relative was given equal right with the distant male relative to inherit, the act on this subject directing the inheritance to descend "without distinction of sex." (*Formerly the common law rule prevailed under which the male line was preferred to the female.*)
3. The mother was given equal right with the father to the custody of children in case of separation of the parents without divorce. (*Formerly the father had the superior right.*)
4. The age at which wills of personal estate may be made was fixed the same for girls as for boys. (*Formerly girls were protected to a less extent than boys.*)

1924

Again the Woman's Party endeavored to secure legislation placing men and women on an equal plane before the law. Twenty-three bills were introduced in the State Legislature. Four were passed and signed by the Governor. One bill was passed by the Legislature and vetoed by the Governor.

1. The mother was given equal rights with the father in the guardianship of the real estate of a minor child. (*Formerly such guardianship belonged to the father.*) This bill was introduced by Senator Frederick M. Davenport and Assemblyman Victor R. Kaufmann.
2. Women school teachers were given equal pay for equal work in public schools up to and including high schools throughout the State. (*Formerly women teachers up-State were discriminated against with regard to salary.*) This law increases the salary of hundreds of women teachers from fifty to one hundred dollars a year. The bill was introduced by Senator Antin and Assemblyman Cole.
3. The property of an absconding wife or mother was made liable under the poor law, just as the property of an absconding husband or father is liable, for the support of the spouse or children left chargeable upon the public for support. (*Formerly only the property of an absconding husband or father was liable.*) The blll was introduced by Senator Davenport and Assemblyman Kaufmann.
4. The property of an absconding wife or mother was made liable, under the code of criminal procedure, just as the property of an absconding husband or father is liable, for the support of the spouse or children left chargeable upon the public for support. (*Formerly only the property of the absconding husband or father was liable.*) The bill was introduced by Senator Davenport and Assemblyman Kaufmann.

1925

Ten Equal Rights bills were introduced in the State Legislature at the request of the Woman's Party, one of which passed and is now the law:

1. The preference given to one sex and the preference given to the unmarried woman over the married woman in the appointment of an administrator of the estate of a deceased person was removed. (*Formerly the law required the Surrogate to prefer a man to a woman—the father to the mother, the brother to the sister, and so on to the remotest of kin. The unmarried woman was also given preference over the married woman in the same degree of relationship.*) This bill was introduced by Assemblyman Willis H. Sargent.

1926

Nine Equal Rights bills were introduced in the State Legislature at the request of the Woman's Party, none of which passed.

The Teachers' Bill

With the exception of the Teachers' bill, all of the Equal Rights measures heretofore described were drafted by the Legal Research Department of the Woman's Party and sponsored by the New York Branch. Three years ago the Woman's Party began an intensive campaign among women teachers, in order that all might join in an effort to remove sex discriminations from the entire educational system in New York State. A most vital interest was found among classroom teachers and bitter opposition on the part of superintendents.

At the request of the Woman's Party, Senator Nathan Straus, Jr., and Assemblyman Victor R. Kaufmann introduced in the Senate and Assembly, respectively, a bill which prohibited in sweeping terms any sex discrimination in the employment of teachers in any educational institution in the State, with reference not only to salary, but also to opportunity for advancement and every other question that might arise respecting the employment of teachers.

Although the State Teachers' Association had at its 1925 convention unanimously passed a resolution favoring equality for men and women teachers, its executive committee decided to head off the more far-reaching bill of the Woman's Party by introducing the Antin-Cole bill covering the question of salary only in public schools up to and including high schools.

When it was found that the Woman's Party bill could not be reported out of committee and that the Cole bill had been reported favorably in the Assembly without committee hearing, and passed the Assembly, the Woman's Party, the State Teachers' Welfare League, the Albany League of Classroom Teachers and individual teachers favoring the Straus-Kaufmann bill concentrated their efforts on the Cole bill, which finally passed the Senate.

Tremendous opposition developed on the part of the school superintendents, and the Governor was urged to veto the bill. Through the speedy and strenuous action of the Woman's Party, the State Teachers' Welfare League, and the State Teachers' Association, a hearing was granted by Governor Smith, who, in spite of the opposition of the school superintendents and the recommendation of the Commissioner of Education to veto the bill, signed it.

Equal Rights

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OBJECT OF THE WOMAN'S PARTY

To remove all forms of the subjection of women.

THE LUCRETIA MOTT AMENDMENT

"Men and women shall have Equal Rights throughout the United States and every place subject to its jurisdiction."

"Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation."

[Senate Joint Resolution Number 11.
House Joint Resolution Number 81.]

Introduced in the Senate, December 8, 1925, by SENATOR CHARLES E. CURTIS.
Introduced in the House of Representatives, December 16, 1925, by REPRESENTATIVE D. R. ANTHONY.

Keep the Faith

THE many friends of Rev. Olympia Brown in the National Woman's Party will feel a sense of irreparable loss at her recent death, for there is no one who can take the place that she has left empty. Although younger by several years than Susan B. Anthony, Lucretia Mott or Elizabeth Cady Stanton, she belonged to the group of pioneers who laid the corner-stone for the Equal Rights movement in America. She was only 13 years old when the first Equal Rights Convention was held in Seneca Falls, but she understood and was a part of the idealism that first phrased itself at that time. Her determination to go to college, to enter the ministry, to keep her own name upon marriage, and to contiuue her career after marriage, set her apart as a woman far ahead of her time.

It was this intense modernness of spirit that brought her into the National Woman's Party and placed her when over 75 years of age in the forefront of its spiritual leadership.

Long before the Woman's Party took a definite stand against "protective" legislation for women only, Rev. Olympia Brown denounced this type of legislation as destructive of Equal Rights and as an obstacle to economic progress.

When asked one time if she belonged to the Woman's Party she replied, "I belonged to it before it was born." Courageous, wide-visioned, strong with the strength of righteousness, she was when she died still far beyond her time. Though dead, she liveth, and through the years to come her dauntless spirit will lead us onward toward the goal that she saw clearly so many years ago.

A Case in Point

A RECENT issue of the New York *Times* carries the following highly illustrative news item:

> Austrian women have won the right to act as chauffeurs for taxicabs. In a test case brought by Felicitas Fischer, the Supreme Court of Administrative affairs nullified yesterday the police order forbidding her such an occupation because of her sex.
>
> The court based its decision on the clause in the Constitution providing for absolute equality of the sexes.
>
> The decision is likely to become a precedent for extending women's rights to other fields.

The case of Felicitas Fischer is a succinct and telling example of what can be accomplished by writing the principle of Equal Rights into a National Constitution.

In the first place it can, at any rate in Austria, elevate women from subservience to the mediaeval form of government associated with arbitrary "police orders"; and in the second place it can prevent the closing of occupations of their choice to women solely on the ground of their sex.

It would hardly seem necessary to point out to the members of the Anglo-Saxon race the superiority of constitutional guarantees over unbridled police power as a means toward instituting justice. Ever since the days of King John men of the Northern races have realized that the extent of their liberty depended directly upon the provisions of the constitution establishing once and for all their rights and placing definite limits on the power of transient governments acting through the police authorities.

Under the Fourteenth Amendment, which guarantees equality before the laws to all citizens, class legislation is definitely divorced from the police power of the various States. Decisions of the Supreme Court, however, have denied the validity of this provision in the case of women. All welfare legislation directed toward women as a class is in direct defiance of the language of the Constitution, yet under the nebulous police powers granted to the various States it has received recognition.

Chief Justice Shaw of Massachusetts has defined police power as "the power vested in the legislature by the Constitution to make, ordain and establish all manner of wholesome and reasonable laws, statutes, and ordinances, either with penalties or without, *not repugnant to the Constitution*, as they shall judge to be for the good and welfare of the commonwealth and of the subjects of the same."

The value of the Federal Equal Rights Amendment rests upon its ability to fix the limits of the police power in respect to women. Belief in the desirability of writing this amendment into the fundamental law of the land is tantamount to belief in constitutional government itself.

Rev. Olympia Brown Dies in Baltimore

THE REV. OLYMPIA BROWN, a pioneer in the Equal Rights movement and the first woman in America to be ordained to the ministry of a regularly constituted ecclesiastical body, died on Saturday, October 23, at her home, 329 Dolphin street, at the age of 91 years. Her death, which was due to heart disease, followed an illness of but a few days.

Mrs. Brown had just returned to Baltimore after an absence of more than a year. Last winter she accompanied her daughter, Miss Gwendolen B. Willis, on a trip to France and Italy, spending the greater part of three months on the Riviera.

Soon after the organization of the Woman's Party Mrs. Brown became a member, and even during the difficult years of the war valiantly supported its policies. She took part in the demonstration of the National Woman's Party on inauguration day, March 4, 1917, when a thousand women marched around the White House four times bearing a banner inscribed with the words, "We demand an amendment to the Constitution of the United States enfranchising women." Although a high wind was blowing and a drenching rain fell steadily throughout the day, Mrs. Brown, then 82 years of age, never faltered in her determination to present to President Wilson the demand of the women of America for political liberty.

On December 16, 1918, when the demonstration at the foot of the Lafayette Monument was held, and the words of the President were burned, Rev. Olympia Brown cast into the flaming cauldron the two speeches that President Wilson had made on the first day of his visit to France.

"America has fought for France and the common cause of liberty," she said. "I have fought for liberty for seventy years and I protest against the President leaving our country with this old fight here unwon."

At the time of the Republican National Convention in Chicago in 1920, although 85 years old at that time, she picketed the convention together with other members.

BY agreement with her husband, the late John Henry Willis, a business man who died in 1893, she retained her maiden name, and in all her public work was known as the Rev. Olympia Brown.

She was a Universalist minister, a lecturer and secretary-treasurer and manager of a daily and weekly newspaper and job printing office (the business managed formerly by her husband).

Born in a log cabin at Prairie Ronde, Mich., January 5, 1835, of New England parentage, she was the daughter of Asa B. and Lethia Brown of Plymouth, Mass., who had gone to Michigan.

She received her degree of bachelor of arts from Antioch College in 1860 and her degree of master of arts in 1867. She was graduated from the Theological School of St. Laurence University, Canton, N. Y., in 1863, and was ordained to the ministry of the Universalist Church in the same year. In 1873 she married Mr. Willis.

She served pastorates at Weymouth, Mass.; Bridgeport, Conn.; Racine, Mukwonago, Neenah and Columbus, Wis.

In 1893 she became secretary and treasurer of the Times Publishing Company, managing a daily and weekly newspaper and a job printing office, and continued in that work until 1900.

In 1866 she first met Susan B. Anthony and from a rather passive devotee of women's rights became an ardent advocate. The meeting with the suffrage leader was at an Equal Rights session in New York City.

The following year, when a Republican Legislature in Kansas submitted to the vote of the people of that State a proposition to amend the State Constitution by striking out the word "male," suffrage leaders selected the Rev. Olympia Brown to campaign for the cause in Kansas. It was the first time that the men of any State had been asked to vote on such a measure.

She went to Kansas and delivered 300 or more speeches in a campaign described by Miss Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton as "never before equaled by man or woman."

Through rough country where there were practically no railroad facilities, where border ruffians and even wild Indians still roved, Mrs. Brown traveled hundreds of miles by stage, by lumber wagon, on horseback or afoot, explaining the rights of women to every community that showed a trace of civilization or had a vote.

So thorough was the campaign that, notwithstanding the fact that the Republican party, father of the amendment, refused to aid the New England woman in the work, withdrew support from the amendment and even sent out circulars opposing it, the election showed one-third of the votes in favor of dropping the word "male" from the State Constitution.

She met with many rebuffs, sometimes being forced to shout her exhortation above the jeers of half-drunken mobs, sometimes being denied a gathering place and being compelled to speak in the street or on a vacant lot.

When the campaign was over, she returned to preaching in New England, but continued actively interested in woman suffrage and all matters affecting women workers and the homes of the nation.

In 1912, at the age of 77, when Kansas again was to vote on woman suffrage, she went once more to the scene of her early work and took part in the campaign that resulted in placing Kansas among the suffrage States. From Kansas she pursued her campaigning through various other States that still were struggling with the suffrage question, and despite her advanced age continued active in the work until 1920, when equal suffrage was made nation-wide by the Federal Constitution.

In 1914, Mrs. Brown decided to make Baltimore her home, and since that time has lived there with her daughter, Miss

An Ardent Spirit Passes

Baltimore Sun Editorial, October 25, 1926.

Olympia Brown carried throughout her long and active life the dauntless courage and the mental freshness of the frontier environment whence she came.

Queen Victoria had not been called to the throne of England when this pioneer American suffragist was born in a Michigan log cabin. Andrew Jackson was still President of the United States. Perhaps that helps to explain why there was so little of Victorian stodginess, so much of Jacksonian virility in the character of Mrs. Willis, to use the married name by which, in accordance with her principles, she was seldom known.

It was a compliment to Baltimore when, at the age of 80, this interesting and charming lady decided to make her home here. At such an age no newcomer would be expected to write a name in current issues. But the Rev. Olympia Brown, though well past her allotted span, could not remain inactive. Perhaps no phase of her life better exemplified her vitality and intellectual independence than the mental discomfort she succeeded in arousing, between her eightieth and ninetieth birthdays, among conservatively-minded Baltimoreans.

Gwyndolen B. Willis, a teacher of Latin and Greek at Bryn Mawr School. She then became a member of the Just Government League of Maryland and afterward a member of the National Woman's Party.

She was connected with the New England Woman's Suffrage Association, one of the first organized in the country, and for thirty years was president of the Wisconsin Woman's Suffrage Association, after which she was made honorary president. She also was president of the Federal Suffrage Association, a life member of the National American Suffrage Association and a member of the Woman's Missionary Association of the Universalist Church.

Mrs. Brown was the author of various tracts and articles, and a book entitled "Acquaintances Old and New Among Reformers."

Besides her daughter, she is survived by a son, Henry Parker Willis, professor of banking at Columbia University and editor of the New York *Journal of Commerce.*

Mrs. Brown was one of the most distinguished and beloved members of the National Woman's Party; her name will go down in history as one of the Founders of the Equal Rights movement in America. Many members of the Party attended the funeral services, which were held in Baltimore on Tuesday, October 26, and a beautiful spray of yellow and white chrysanthemums, caught together with purple ribbons, was placed at the foot of the bier. Interment was at Racine, Wisconsin.

At a meeting of the Maryland Branch of the Woman's Party, held on October 25, resolutions of sympathy were passed and were sent to the members of Mrs. Brown's family.

Eleanor Morton on the Rights of Women

(Reprinted from the Philadelphia "Public Ledger.")

I WAS speaking to a young woman lawyer the other day and heard her amazement at the place which women still hold in the eyes of the law. "Do you realize," she said, "that in some States today a woman may still be struck by her husband (acting as her "legal guardian" with the right to chastise her) if the 'stick' he uses be, as the law puts it, 'no thicker than a man's thumb'? Do you know that if a woman should be injured or killed, her husband has the right to sue the individual or company who has hurt or killed her—for recompense, for the 'loss of her services' which belong to him legally, since she is his wife? Do you know that if a man and woman separate, without divorce, and both are equally guiltless of cause for legal separation, the money earned by their children (although the wife may have them in her charge) really belongs—by law — to the father, who is their legal guardian?"

She admitted that, although this was the letter of the law, the spirit of the law has been interpreted much more generously of late, in some States. But she reminded me that there was still a tremendous difference in the rights of a woman when she is married, and those of a man who is married, before the law.

"WE say that we have passed the Suffrage Amendment, and that women and men now have Equal Rights. It is to laugh! The struggle for Equal Rights has only just begun! Women think that they have Equal Rights because they are beginning to earn their own living, and they can go to the polls just like men. What they mean is that they have equal obligations now. Their rights they have still to fight for, as Feminists know!"

My friend flashed a smile at her own intensity, but added with earnestness: "And, of course, the struggle for these rights will be a hard and a long one. It must be, for two reasons. The first reason is that fighting for legal rights is not a picturesque thing, but a long, tedious and quiet task; and the second, that a woman, when she marries, no matter how independent and self-respecting she may have been as a spinster, falls more or less deeply into the abyss of all married women, the abyss of sacrifice to her man, with the consequent desire to efface herself, even legally, in him. She doesn't care a rap about her place as an individual, before the law—until something unforeseen happens to bring her to bitter realization of how important having that place would have been. If, however, her husband dies, or if he proves himself a scoundrel, then she finds abruptly enough how useful it would have been to be an individual with rights recognized in herself, by the law, and demanded by herself before the law!"

She summed up her indignant protest with a phrase: "Legal protection, that's what women have today. The law makes itself their guardian, as it makes itself the guardian of children and idiots. What women want, though, is to be adults before the law—and adult persons of normal intelligence. They won't have their adult rights until, in every State in the Union, women possess the same standing that is given the men there."

HEARING my friend, I could not but think of a letter shown me by the editor of the *Public Ledger,* a "letter to the editor" published Saturday, September 23, 1876—fifty years ago, which said:

"The old common law of England, which still disgraces our statute books, gives the wife to the husband, so that he may govern the household, choose her associates, separate her from relatives, restrain her personal and religious freedom, and, if necessary, chastise her with the same moderation he would an apprentice or child.

"Children belong to the father. He is entitled to their labor and custody, and has power to dispose of them till they are 21, by deed or legacy, though they be unborn at his death. He may, by will, at death, give them away from the mother into the custody of any guardian. 'A mother is entitled to no power but to respect from her children; she has no legal authority over them, no right to their services.'

"A wife may convey property to her husband, by gift or loan, but he cannot convey real estate to her save through a trustee; nor can he give her anything nor covenant with her, for that would suppose her separate existence (from him). In case of divorce obtained by her, on the ground of his unfaithfulness, she receives only half the property which she brought to her husband at marriage. She loses her dower by unfaithfulness, but the husband does not lose his courtesy on that account.

"A wife cannot protect herself, or property, nor enforce a contract by law, unless her husband join in the suit; she cannot give a bond or a warrant of attorney. She cannot be a corporate member of any institution, though endowed by herself, except one composed and managed by women, and having as its object the care of children or of sick or indigent women."

THE last clause is rather delicious! The entire letter, however, is illuminating in illustrating the progress which has undoubtedly been made in "women's rights," in the last fifty years.

As Ernest Votaw put it, speaking of the changes in letter and interpretation of the law today: "A wife's services in this State are still supposed to be due to her husband, and he can sue for loss of these services through injury or death. But that is to protect her through adequate recompense when hurt. If a wife works, on the other hand, everything she earns by her services belongs to herself, and none of her wages to her husband. A woman today cannot yet give surety or bond; but that protects against fraud and imposition. She can now enter into any contract she wants.

"A father is still legally the head of the household, but when the home is broken the law gives his children to his wife's care, not his, though he may have as high character as she, and may love them and want them deeply. A wife no longer need give her husband her dower if he is not true to her. But if a man dies intestate, his wife receives not only one-half his property, but $300 additional; whereas if the wife dies without a will, her husband can inherit only the half-part of her estate."

A distinguished Philadelphia lawyer, who refuses to have his name quoted, spoke with real indigation, of the small appreciation shown to the advance of women before the law in the preceding half-century, an advance which, he insists, has made the woman citizen an unwarranted favorite

"Disabilities of women?" he said. "The tendency of the law all over this country today is to bend backward in their favor!" He quoted the records of many States in their divorce courts, giving healthy women alimony (and support for life) without demanding continuance of family obligations on their part, and for trival causes; he pointed to the fact that woman need not do a stroke of work in her house, and her husband can do nothing about it, whereas she can bring him before the law for punishment if he will not work; he concluded with: "Why, even when they do work, the law steps in and says how long and hard and at what jobs a woman can be employed, and doesn't give a hang about her man!"

NOT without interest as indicating the "old" point of view, and the most "new" are these two recent news items. In Washington a legal decision declared last month that a wife's earnings belong to her husband; in California the courts decided that a rich wife must pay her divorced husband alimony.

Women have been protesting that the law has no right to tell them how long, and at what sort of jobs, they shall work; they wish equal freedom economically, with men. The California decision indicates the newest recognition of that economic equality.

The trend appears to be, however, in this direction—with married women the law is concerning itself more and more not with the rights of the wife or her husband, but of their children. The father still "governs" the household in the eyes of the law, and if his wife does not choose to live where he choses to make a home, she is said to break their marriage contract, whereas he may live where he wishes; yet—if she does not live with him, the law will give her their child, if there is any way at all of arranging that it "remain with the mother."

A wife's property is her own now, but the law still protects her from fraud through bond and surety loss—so that she may have enough to provide for the children in her home. And she may be a member of any institution she now chooses to join—even to fight for "women's rights before the law."

All the law asks of her is that she remain fitted to hold the guardianship of her children; the law itself will do all that is possible to protect them, through her. Even in the matter of working hours, set and arranged by law, it is not the woman herself whom the law considers, but her children—the race.

In taking cognizance of the vital importance which women have as guardians—not only natural, but legal—of the race, the law has taken its most tremendous step forward, so far.

Press Comment

Towards Equality

The Vote, Organ of the Women's Freedom League, London, England,

AT the recent Paris Congress, the Women's Freedom League delegates gave their full and undivided support to every resolution which aimed at securing the complete equality of women with men, no matter under what heading the discussions came; and they offered uncompromising opposition to any proposal for the restriction of women's work or their sphere of usefulness. Our delegates were in complete accord with the demand of the Alliance that women be admitted without restriction to all posts and professions, and that, in regard to professional education, salary, and advancement, they should be on absolutely the same footing as men. With regard to modern marriage laws, they supported the resolution that these should be based on absolute equality of husband and wife; that marital authority should be abolished in those countries where it still exists; and that the parents should have equal authority over their children.

Another important resolution which our delegates supported was that the Alliance, through its auxiliaries, should bring pressure to bear upon the governments to secure the appointment of women to the League of Nations Private International Law Committee, since its recommendations will vitally affect the status and rights of women. The resolution demanding the employment of women police with the same status and powers as their male colleagues also received their support. We are glad, too, that our own resolution, calling upon organized women in all countries to insist that there shall be women governors and women deputy-governors in all women's prisons and women's sections of prisons, women medical officers in all women's prisons, and women inspectors of prisons, was passed by the Alliance. At the same time we regret that our other resolution, strongly recommending that in hospitals containing women patients suffering from illness of body or mind, these patients shall be treated by women doctors, and that in the administration of these institutions and the ultimate control of the patients, women shall have equal responsibility with men, did not secure a majority of votes.

Our delegates enthusiastically supported the following: "This Congress of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance, believing that the possession of the vote is both an indispensable instrument for the attainment of practical reforms and a matter of wider import affecting the whole status of womanhood, protests against the inequality of the franchise (parliamentary or municipal) existing in Belgium, Canada, Great Britain, Greece, Hungary, Northern Ireland, Italy, and Spain. It calls upon the governments of these countries to remove this injustice by the immediate granting of the vote to women at the same age and on the same terms as men."

The foregoing resolutions and many others proposed at the Paris Congress show clearly that, although the equality of women with men in regard to status, opportunities, rewards, and responsibilities may be within sight in some countries, this complete equality is certainly not within reach in the great majority of countries; but we confidently rely upon the women delegates who attended this Congress to work with might and main to secure further measures of equality in their own countries between now and three years hence, when they hope to meet one another again at the Eleventh Congress of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance.

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News from the Field

Mississippi Branch at State Fair

THE Mississippi Branch of the National Woman's Party had an exhibit at the Mississippi State Fair, held in Jackson on October 18 to 23. The exhibit was composed of posters on the Woman's Party's campaign for Equal Rights between men and women in Mississippi and the whole United States. The booth was decorated with the purple, white, and gold banners of the National Woman's Party.

Garden Prize Received

A COLLECTION of Darwin tulip bulbs, awarded to the garden of the National Woman's Party for the best exhibition of rare flowers at the summer show of the American Horticultural Society in Washington, has been received at National Headquarters. The bulbs have been planted in the Woman's Party gardens where they will blossom next summer. The prize will thus add loveliness to the garden which won two first prizes in exhibitions this year. The bulbs were transmitted to the National Woman's Party by David Lumsden, chairman of the Exhibition Committee of the American Horticultural Society.

Arguments Presented Pro and Con

MRS. MARY A. MURRAY, chairman of the Industrial Council of the Woman's Party, and Mrs. Clarence M. Smith, New York State chairman, debated the proposed 48-hour week law for women in industry with Miss Dorothy Straus, legislative chairman of the League of Women Voters, before the American Federation of Industrial Women, at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, on Monday evening, October 18.

Miss Straus' arguments in favor of special "protective" laws for women were the usual ones about "women being different from men and having housework to do after their day's work is finished; that women always have been and now are at a disadvantage in working with men, through custom and tradition; that a change toward a short work day has gradually been built up, citing the steel industry as an example; that wages have gone up since the passage of some of the protective laws for women, thus disproving claims to the contrary; that any healthy woman who loses her job through protective laws is quickly absorbed by industry; that she wants equality to come gradually, and that even if some women in industry do object to protection, they should be legislated for in the interests of the community."

The Woman's Party speakers pointed out that even though women workers have been at a disadvantage through custom and tradition, there is no use in perpetuating by law an unjust custom and tradition; that the eight-hour day which has been gradually built up through voluntary agreement between the employer and employe is a very different proposition from the arbitrary eight-hour *law* proposed for women, with its prohibition of overtime with pay; that wages for both men and women are much higher than they have ever been, regardless of existing restrictive laws for women, because of the higher cost of living, but even so, women's wages are lower than men's wages; that no one followed up the women who lost their jobs when the law was passed prohibiting them from working in certain occupations after 10 P. M., to know how or where they were "absorbed." We do know that some who were being well-paid at night were forced to accept much lower wages for a day-time job.

FROM A CORRESPONDENT

Paris, France.

DEAR EQUAL RIGHTS:

I hesitated whether I would write you in French or in English, but my code of politeness suggests that I would write in your language.

Indeed, the sweetest dreams have accompanied me during my journey since leaving your Headquarters in Washington. Your pictures of the three great women, Lucretia Mott, Susan B. Anthony, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and also the picture of Inez Milholland seemed to urge me on for the French crusade for Equal Rights.

I want to express my warmest thanks for your delightful hospitality. I have appreciated and enjoyed the National Headquarters of the Woman's Party extremely, but my greatest pleasure has been the opportunity to meet those of you who were at the Headquarters and speak about women's problems.

Yours most sincerely,
(Signed) RENEE JARDIN.

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Treasurer's Report

EDITH AINGE, *Treasurer*
NETTIE TRAIL: *C. P. A., Auditor.*

RECEIPTS collected by National Headquarters December 7, 1912, to October 8, 1926, $1,370,925.73.

Contributions, membership and other receipts October 8 to 22, 1926:

Rev. E. White, D. C.	$1.00
Miss Lillian Oliver, D. C.	1.00
Miss Nell F. Mercer, Va.	10.00
Miss Marguerite V. Pohek, N. Y.	1.00
Mrs. Clara Wright, N. J.	1.00
Mrs. Elizabeth Wallace Clark, D. C.	25.00
Mrs. F. L. Woodward, Colo.	25.00
Per Minnesota Branch: (Minnesota Branch retaining one-half)	
Mrs. M. K. Knauff	.50
Mrs. Anna Zon	.50
Miss Leonora Hoffman	.50
Mrs. A. R. Colvin	5.00
Miss Gilbert A. Cone, D. C.	10.00
Mrs. H. M. Damon, N. Y.	1.00
Mrs. Mary C. Heldring Bye, Pa.	10.00
Miss E. B. Scripps, Calif.	100.00
Miss Mabel Newell, Md.	1.00
Miss Anna Louise Dunning, Md.	1.00
Miss Julie M. Mayer, D. C.	1.00
Payment for newspaper article	132.90
Dividend on endowment stock	11.25
EQUAL RIGHTS subscriptions (forwarded to EQUAL RIGHTS office)	9.00
Rent of rooms at Headquarters	184.50
Deposits on keys	2.50
Sale of "Jailed for Freedom"	2.00
Sale of leaflets "1913-1926"	.50
Sale of general literature	.55
Rent of piano	4.00
Catering	5.00
Refund from State Branch on membership	3.50
Miscellaneous	.40
Payment for coal	.60
Total receipts of National Headquarters	$551.20
Per Equal Rights Committee:	
Mrs. Elizabeth Wallace Clark, D. C.	25.00
Total receipts, October 8 to 22, 1926	$576.20
Total receipts, December 7, 1912, to October 22, 1926	$1,371,501.93

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